

## **DEPARTMENTAL BUDGET INFORMATION**

### **LAW (32)**

#### **MISSION**

The mission of the Law Department is to deliver excellent and efficient legal counseling and representation to the Executive and Legislative branches of City government as mandated by the City Charter.

#### **DESCRIPTION**

The Law Department is headed by the corporation counsel, who is appointed by the Mayor. The Law Department is comprised of five divisions: Administrative, Commercial, Labor/Workers' Compensation, Property/Environmental and Litigation. Each division, with the exception of the Administrative Division, is responsible for a discrete area of the law and is made up of several sections.

The Law Department is required, by Charter, to represent the City of Detroit in all civil actions or proceedings filed against the city. The corporation counsel may also prosecute any action or proceeding in which the city has a legal interest when directed to do so by the Mayor. The corporation counsel is the city prosecutor and shall institute, on behalf of the people, cases arising from the provisions of the charter or city ordinances, and prosecute all actions for the recovery of fines, penalties and forfeitures.

The Law Department is also responsible for providing advice and opinions to the Mayor, a member of City Council or the head of any city agency, for approving all contracts, bonds and written instruments and for drafting, upon the request of the Mayor or any member of City Council, any ordinance

or resolution for introduction before City Council.

#### **CORE SERVICES**

***Internal Services*** – The Law Department is a critical support services Department for the City of Detroit, as all aspects of the City's government and all City initiatives must be conducted in accordance with applicable statutes, rules and regulations. The demand for legal services has increased commensurate with the growth in volume and diversity of the City's operations. The Department is committed to providing timely assistance and improving response time to its clients, to acceptable industry standards.

The Law Department has attempted to keep pace with the growing demand through increased emphasis on client service and responsiveness; enhanced skills training of lawyers, paralegal and clerical support staff; improved management and supervision of the Department's many law practices; modernization of Law's internal practice support systems such as automated time tracking and billing systems, records management system, and case management and litigation support systems; streamlining of the Department's systems; and improvement of law practice aids and manuals.

#### **MAJOR INITIATIVES**

Major substantive client initiatives to which the Law Department will be dedicated in FY 2002 are greater support of the city's economic and business development transactions, projects and agreements; improvements in City land assembly and land sale processes; increased collections of delinquent city revenues and accounts

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receivable; stepped up enforcement of ordinances which affect the quality of neighborhood life, such as environmental and drug enforcement ordinances; increased support of revision and streamlining of City business process associated with the City's DRMS system implementation; and increased emphasis on risk management counseling to city managers and personnel in order to reduce the City's liability exposure and consequent payouts.

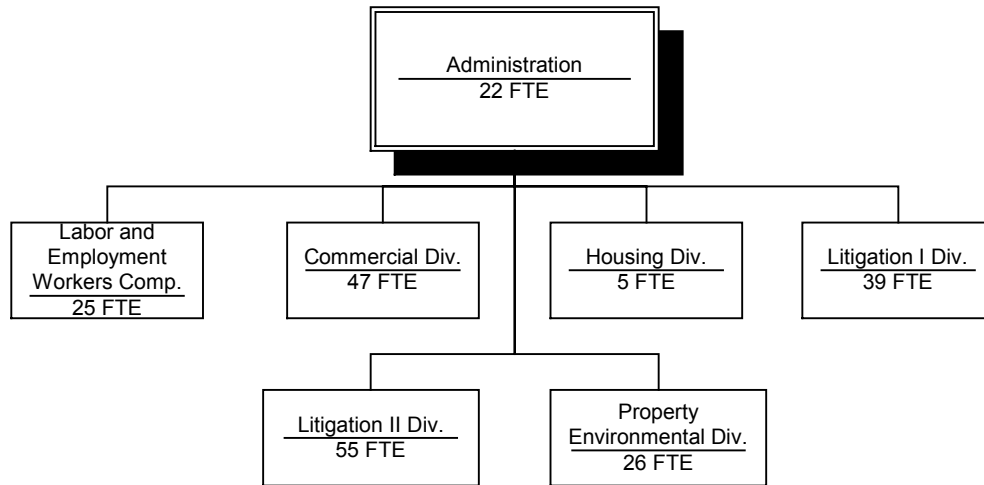
Major initiatives planned for FY 2002: establishment of lawyer teams dedicated to improved department client communication and client needs assessment; continuing improvements in quality of law practice of all department practice groups, with special focus on workers compensation practice; installation of formalized protocol for client risk management reporting; completion of implementation of computerized case management system for improved tracking of all client matters and cases; restructuring of all department's claims handling procedures in tandem with computerization of claims process; continued improvements in department's revenue collections and litigation practice.

#### **PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE**

The Law Department's strategic initiatives for the next five years should encompass the

following business objectives: 1) continued emphasis on substantive skills training of attorneys, claims investigators, and legal secretaries to better equip them to perform their jobs; 2) continued emphasis on management training and effective departmental management; 3) continued focus on effective client service and client relations, including risk management counseling and timely completion of client assignments and counseling requests; 4) continuation of joint labor-management ventures designed to improve labor and management relations and employee morale throughout the department; 5) further refinement of performance evaluations tools and process for reinforcement of satisfactory performance and identification of training needs and areas for improvement; 6) revision of documentation of all administrative business and law practice operations and processes in the department; 7) completion of implementation of five-year technology plan, with continued integration of advanced computerized records management, case management and litigation support systems into its operations and processes; 8) continued integration of department legal assistants as support for the attorney's law practice; and 9) maintenance of a professional physical and work environment conducive to a high-quality municipal law practice.

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**PERFORMANCE GOALS, MEASURES AND TARGETS**

<b>Goals: Measures</b>	<b>1999-00 Actual</b>	<b>2000-01 Projection</b>	<b>2001-02 Target</b>
Maximize and monitor the level of client satisfaction with department services: Percent of clients rating department services satisfactory or better.	N/A	70%	95%
Provide effective, ongoing risk management advice and counseling to all City departments: Clients training workshops	34	40	41
Ensure attorney preparedness for all legal proceedings and client contacts and the department's ability to consistently meet all deadlines: Percent of timely responses to written assignments	61%	70%	90%
Provide continuous professional skills training to all lawyers and staff to maximize the quality and efficiency of legal services delivered to the City: Percent of professional staff attending at least one external training program per year	55%	55%	100%
Maximize the City's financial solvency and business growth through aggressive collection of City revenues, effective representation in claims and litigation for and against the City, and effective and timely advice and representation of the City in commercial and development transactions: Levels of revenue collections	\$7,899,875	\$16,837,812	\$22,525,000

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**EXPENDITURES**

	1999-00 Actual Expense	2000-01 Redbook	2001-02 Mayor's Budget Rec	Variance	Variance Percent
Salary & Wages	\$ 9,353,780	\$ 11,398,885	\$ 12,965,445	\$ 1,566,560	14%
Employee Benefits	4,279,212	5,400,955	6,470,370	1,069,415	20%
Prof/Contractual	9,321,695	6,249,950	6,648,738	398,788	6%
Operating Supplies	115,832	393,896	394,822	926	0%
Operating Services	4,165,480	3,870,505	4,520,673	650,168	17%
Capital Equipment	385,100	242,240	347,959	105,719	44%
Other Expenses	60,489	105,000	112,000	7,000	7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 27,681,588</b>	<b>\$ 27,661,431</b>	<b>\$ 31,460,007</b>	<b>\$ 3,798,576</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>POSITIONS</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>7%</b>

**REVENUES**

	1999-00 Actual Revenue	2000-01 Redbook	2001-02 Mayor's Budget Rec	Variance	Variance Percent
Grants/ Shared	100,437	-	-	-	0%
Sales & Charges	\$ 868,676	\$ 3,631,332	\$ 3,631,332	\$ -	0%
Sales of Assets/	14	-	-	-	0%
Miscellaneous	149,496	95,000	95,000	-	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 1,118,623</b>	<b>\$ 3,726,332</b>	<b>\$ 3,726,332</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>0%</b>